

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE A-1

NEW YORK TIMES
18 JULY 1979

Some Senators Say an Arms Pact Loophole Aids Soviet

By RICHARD BURT
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, July 17 — A new issue in the Senate debate over the strategic arms treaty has arisen with the realization that the treaty would allow the Soviet Union to deploy up to five intercontinental missile systems now under development.

Senate aides said that, during a closed hearing of the Senate Intelligence Committee last week, Adm. Stansfield Turner, Director of Central Intelligence, said the deployment was permitted under the pact's provisions on missile modernization and replacement.

The treaty allows the testing and deployment of an entirely new type of missile as well as the modification of existing types within 5 percent of some of their present characteristics such as weight and size.

One Entirely New System Allowed

Witnesses for the Government have tended to stress that each side, under the treaty, would be permitted to deploy the one entirely new missile system. But White House and Pentagon aides confirmed today that the modernization provisions would allow the Russians to deploy five new types of missiles.

The new Soviet missiles, including a replacement for the SS-18 heavy missile, are said to be part of a "fifth generation" of systems that Secretary of Defense Harold Brown disclosed a year ago.

As a result of Admiral Turner's testimony, some senators critical of the treaty are now saying that the Govern-

ment misled them by asserting earlier that the accord permitted both sides only one new type of land-based missile. They said that Soviet Union's apparent ability to deploy additional systems could become a central issue in hearings next week before the Armed Services Committee.

Pentagon aides, while conceding that Moscow could replace its existing force of land-based missiles with new systems, denied any intention to mislead the Senate. They said that, in testimony before the Foreign Relations Committee last week, Secretary Brown alluded to the replacement missiles by saying that "all but one of these new missiles will have to be restricted to quite limited modifications of their predecessors."

The aides said the issue of new missile systems reflected differences over how Article IV of the treaty was to be interpreted. The article says that each side can deploy only one "new type" of land-based missile. But it also allows modification of existing types as long as the changes do not increase or decrease the weight, size or lifting power of the missiles by more than 5 percent.

Critics See Loophole in Treaty

Opponents of the treaty regard the 5 percent provision as a loophole. They say that the provision, while restricting allowable modifications, does not stop the Russians from replacing existing models with new systems in the next few years. Under the treaty, they say, Moscow can say that any new missile system is only a modification of an earlier type.

Intelligence officials say that the Soviet Union's new generation of missiles under development consists of one heavy, liquid-fueled missile, two medium-size, liquid-fueled systems and two smaller solid-fuel systems. Critics say that the treaty would enable Moscow to use the new sys-

tems to replace the existing heavy SS-18 as well as the SS-17 and SS-19 missiles.

A Pentagon aide involved in the arms treaty did not dispute that the SS-18 and other missiles might be replaced. But he said the restrictions on increases in weight and size would insure that any threat posed by the new missiles would not be fundamentally different from that of the existing Soviet arsenal.

He also noted that any new missiles would not be permitted to carry more warheads than the systems they replaced. As a result, he said, with the exception of the one new type allowed each side, the Soviet systems could be considered variants of existing missiles.

This interpretation was questioned by aides on the Armed Services Committee who said that the new missiles could be made more lethal than the weapons they replaced. While the treaty would not allow the new systems to differ significantly in weight and size from existing missiles, the aides said, the new generation of missiles could still be more accurate and reliable and would be easier to maintain.